



VIDEO STREAMING: THE NEXT BIG THING!

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Video Streaming: The Next Big Thing

Ten years ago, the airing of a much-awaited movie on television would be heralded by great gusto and a giant tub of popcorn. Back then, our entertainment was regimented by a television timetable, leaving us to work our daily schedules around it. Much has changed in ten years. Now, the giant tubs of popcorn accompany digital binges on the internet. Video streaming sites sit in the Favourites tab of our computers and our hearts. And in the next ten years, they'll only get bigger and better.

Video streaming serves myriad purposes. Through the power of moving images, videos are easier and quicker to consume, and enable geographical targeting of users. They also cut across language barriers. Aside from entertainment, they are used for live events, business broadcasting and video calling. Businesses are adopting video communication to bridge distances and to bring people closer. Conferences, product launches, personal interviews and organisational announcements are being facilitated virtually, reducing costs and enhancing branding and marketing efforts.

Video streaming can tell a story better. Likely, even yours.

[Unboxing the Video Potential in 2017](#)

You're probably reading this on a device connected to the internet. And chances are, you're connected to the internet through some device for the most part of your day. It just goes to show the spread and reach of the World Wide Web.

Online consumption has grown exponentially in the past decade. And it appears that this is just the beginning. 2017 is a big year for online video consumption, with video traffic expected to constitute 74% of total internet usage. Millennials favour nimble storytelling, and videos



are the perfect medium to that. Snapchat, for instance, features 10 billion user stories per day, and Facebook records about 8 million views from 500 million users daily.

There's another trend emerging amongst young internet users that you're probably already privy to: the simultaneous usage of two screens. Facetiming a friend while watching a video on the laptop, for instance. Or uploading an Instagram Story while watching television. Users are consuming multiple stories at a time.

**VIDEO
CONSUMPTION IS
CHANGING:
OTT CONTENT
IS BECOMING
POPULAR.**

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As the market for video opens up, Over the Top (OTT) content broadcasting is emerging as a hot trend this year. OTT typically means that media houses make their content available to online platforms in addition to conventional channels. Take HBO as an example. The media company followed a traditional distribution strategy for years, releasing their content exclusively through cable networks. Today, HBO broadcasts its content via their online digital platform, HBO Go, enabling viewers to watch their favourite shows, anytime, anywhere. Whether it is visiting a restaurant or watching a movie in a cinema, consumers crave immersive experiences. And while video content can deliver these experiences, Virtual Reality will redefine the way users



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delve into content. VR refers to a suite of technologies that draw a user into an artificial environment that resemble reality. Usually, VR is created through headsets, 12 million of which were sold in 2016. 2017, however, promises even more; astronomical sales of headsets are expected with a fall in prices. This means there is a world of opportunity waiting to be uncovered in VR streaming.



**STREAMING IS BECOMING
FASTER THAN EVER BEFORE:
4K LIVE
STREAMING**

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In 2017, 4k live streaming will be folded into many broadcasting platforms. This ultra-fast streaming form rests on bandwidths between 15 and 20 Mbps, which many home broadbands offer. Netflix, Amazon and YouTube already broadcast content on 4k, and smaller players are quickly catching up. Along with speed, though, the human eye has become more receptive to colour and detail. That's how High Dynamic Range (HDR) technology can change the way we view content. HDR enables screens to display a vaster array of tones; whiter whites, bluer blues, the deepest of purples. Every hue is captured. High Frame Rate (HFR) works in tandem with HDR, delivering about 60 or more frames per second, making video quality more fluid and seamless.



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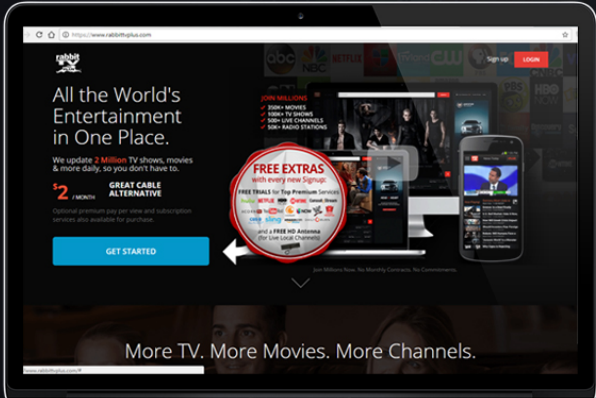
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Brands That Have Built a Business on Video Streaming

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A unique video curation platform:
RabbitTV.

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Yet, it isn't just video technology companies and marketplaces that are using video to power their businesses. An increasing number of brands are now using video to drive their marketing strategies and business operations. Zendesk provides a basket of products that are designed to better your relationships with customers. The brand's unique marketing strategy is underpinned by its popular YouTube channel, which contains fun marketing videos and short training videos.

Moz, an SEO company, uses a similar approach. Its YouTube channel boasts a tremendous following and receives more than 4,000 views per day. Add that up over a month, and you'll see that it amounts to a lot!

Opportunity for Video Streaming Businesses

Whether you are planning to set up an exclusive business modelled on video consumption, or are adding a video feature to your existing business, there are enough ideas you could draw inspiration from.

Whether you are planning to set up an exclusive business modelled on video consumption, or are adding a video feature to your existing business, there are enough ideas you could draw inspiration from.

1. Product Demonstrations: Any product can be demonstrated in a video. If it's tangible, a video is a conducive vehicle to explain the features of your offering. If it's intangible, it's even better. A live stream could be a great medium for real-time interaction.

2. User Generated Content (UGC): UGC is video content created for your brand by third-party users. If you have a makeup brand, for instance, UGC in your network may consist of makeup tutorials by



customers. Handpick your top UGC providers with a sizeable following and sponsor them to promote specific products in your range.

3. Interviews with Experts: Experts generate a buzz, whichever field they belong to. By interviewing them, you can leverage this energy, as well as impart confidence in your users. Remember, though, that seeking an outright endorsement from an expert can come across as unauthentic. Keep your interviews as genuine as possible.

4. Online Advertisements: Online ads are mirroring the effect that television spots have on users. Sometimes, users specifically search for an interesting ad, revisiting it after viewing it on television. The ads on the AXE range of men's deodorants, for instance, have been uploaded to YouTube to resonate with young viewers.

5. Vlogs: If you're a lifestyle brand, a vlog could be just the way to connect with your users. Create short videos showcasing your products, featuring a candid, casual vibe. Or if you're in a more serious business like banking, showcase a session on financial planning, or how to secure a loan.

Monetisation Models in Video Streaming

A monetisation model for a video streaming platform is largely dependent on the target market and its propensity to consume content. Once a brand knows who its audience is, it can sift through the following options:

1. Advertising: When your viewership is built on volumes, advertising through pre-rolls, mid-rolls and post-rolls is viable. Because there is no charge for consumption, your user base is likely to multiply quickly, a fact that you can leverage while pitching to advertisers. Hulu and YouTube are the most popular free video sharing websites that show advertisements while a video is streaming, and their popularity is evidence enough that this model can be successful.



2.Subscription Model: Netflix offers a plan menu to users. User preferences vary, and some video platforms personalise their platter to cater to every segment. For this model to work, you need to curate premium quality content that users would be willing to pay for. Licensing and collaborations with media houses and studios become imperative. Netflix has seen growth only because it has continually ramped up its offerings, featuring a vast library of titles across a range of genres.

3. À La Carte: iTunes is a great example of how a user can pay for a single piece of content rather than paying for a whole subscription pack that they may not use. One video or one song could appeal to more people than a monthly package. Setting up a paid content website is fairly straightforward. Using DRM (Digital Rights Management), a broadcaster can make sure that its content is rights-protected and can be securely streamed. The majority of websites operating on this business model work out a revenue-share arrangement and take 10%-30% of the transaction fee.

4. Subscription per Channel: This is a combination of à la carte and the subscription model. By offering users the option of subscribing to a single paid channel, broadcasters can personalise their approach and use niche strategies to create better advertising content.

Video Streaming Technologies

There are a variety of technologies and approaches that brands use to build their video streaming engine. The key pillars, however, are highlighted below:

1. IT Infrastructure: Selecting the right service provider to fulfil technology requirements is imperative. Brands assess several factors including Cloud Hosting services and storage capacity. IT Infrastructure forms the foundation for a video streaming platform. Examples: AWS, Google Cloud, IBM Softlayer, Microsoft Azure.



2. Content Delivery Network (CDN) - CDN provides a smooth streaming experience on a platform by minimising buffering. Brands that have a high dependency on quality streaming prefer to invest in a superior CDN. Examples: Amazon Cloud Front, Akamai

3. Online Video Player (OVP) - An OVP is a player that streams videos on a platform. Some brands choose a readymade player while some develop their own one. Examples: JWPlayer, HTML5 Based players

The technology stack that you use can greatly impact your site's performance. Let's look at Netflix as an example. Netflix has leveraged public clouds like ec2 and AWS and used NoSQL-based persistence solutions like CAP Theorem to build its framework. The Netflix Cloud Platform is a layer of services, tools, frameworks and technologies that are stacked on top of ec2/AWS. The Netflix technology stack, however, is very expensive.

Luckily, there's a technology that offers the same interface and performance at an affordable price. Streamhash is a turnkey framework that allows you to set up a video streaming platform in just 2 days, and at about one-hundredth the launch cost. The platform is widely used by companies, and is a superior alternative to in-house development or other readymade technologies. Its spectrum of features, coupled with its responsive design, give you a premium experience, and the Streamhash web platform and the admin dashboard provide a uniform feel irrespective of the device it is being operated on.

Streamhash also comes with inbuilt themes, that can be cast to customise the appearance of the platform. The product features an SEO-augmentation function and a functional admin panel. Streamhash minimises redundancy by providing different servers for your site: a Nginx one for video streaming, and an Apache one for web pages.

The platform is supported by **Real Time Messaging Protocol (RTMP)** technology, a free, open source extension module that is linked to the



Nginx web server. Of course, you'll find other technologies if you scour for options, but these are vastly more expensive. Some examples are Wowza Streaming Engine and Adobe Flash Media Server. RTMP is a flexible, economical platform.

Especially if your user base is scattered across areas with poor internet availability, you should keep latency as an important deciding factor. RTMP has a lower latency than other technologies, ensuring that even users with lower bandwidths can access quality learning content. With a lower latency, real-time interactions are also possible and buffering is reduced.

Advantages of Video Streaming

Video streaming has transformed our lives in more ways than one. As we move towards a lifestyle embracing wearable video technology, there are several advantages that we can look forward to:

1. Instant Viewing: With video streaming, there are no lags between content delivery and consumption, regardless of whether the streaming is live or recorded. When a user wants to access the media, it is readily available. Tastemade, an insta-recipe platform, is a perfect example. The site hosts a multitude of quick and easy recipes, available to anyone at any time.

2. No Download Lags: Unlike a media download, buffering happens as the content is being played.

3. No Memory Wastage: Downloads take up space and choke up memory. Streaming is hassle-free and keeps your memory for more important things.

4. No Bandwidth Restrictions: While a faster bandwidth can speed up buffering, a slower internet speed can still play media, albeit slower. With downloads, on the other hand, there are sometimes restrictions with certain content files.



5. Greater Security: There is a lower chance of piracy and copyright infringement, as you are not providing access to users to download the content.

Limitations of Video Streaming

The main limitation of video screening is its fluidity across devices. Some media providers aren't equipped to offer a consistent experience on a mobile handset as on an iPad. But standardisation using the right technology is possible, and quite easy. Internet speeds of users can also pose as a concern, but with the explosion of the internet market worldwide, the opportunity will only grow.

The Smartphone as an Enabler

Most everybody has a smartphone nowadays. And unlike earlier, when a phone would be swiped open for an occasional Whatsapp exchange or Facebook post, Generation Y is big on video. 46% of video consumption happens on the smartphone, and smartphone video consumption has grown 170% since 2013.



The advertisement features a hand holding a smartphone that displays a video of a woman playing a violin. The video player interface on the phone shows a progress bar at 00:00:01, a battery icon, and a storage indicator for 100000MB. The background of the ad is dark blue. On the left, white text reads "THE **SMARTPHONE** IS **CONNECTING** MORE USERS TO **VIDEO CONTENT**." Below this, social media links are listed: Facebook (www.facebook.com/StreamHash), Twitter (www.twitter.com/streamhash), and Email (contact@streamhash.com). The StreamHash website URL (www.streamhash.com) is also visible in the top right corner of the ad.



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There are some interesting trends to note for video marketers. In a study done in 2016, it was found that 69% of all videos watched on handsets were less than 10 minutes long. Content over 10 minutes long was primarily consumed on larger screens, constituting 74% of all video watched on connected televisions.

If you're planning to launch video as part of your business model, consider using a mobile-first strategy. Research shows that millennials are twice as inclined to watch a video on their smartphone than on a television. While you may be able to reach a certain section of your audience using traditional marketing tools, you'll leave a whole section out if you don't recognise the power of the small screen.

The price points of data are dropping and telecom providers are crafting ingenious ways to provide more content without compromising on subscribers' data. In the U.S., operators like AT&T and Verizon, are dabbling in sponsored content, where content providers pay a certain sum to offset a user's data consumption. Meanwhile, **Video on Demand (VoD)** companies like Netflix are conceptualising ways to compress content to reduce bandwidth consumption.

[2017 – The Year of Video Streaming](#)

2017 promises to be the year of video streaming. With the world becoming a virtual neighbourhood, it is only a matter of time before every business, regardless of industry, employs video as a medium of communication. Perhaps this year will pave the way.





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